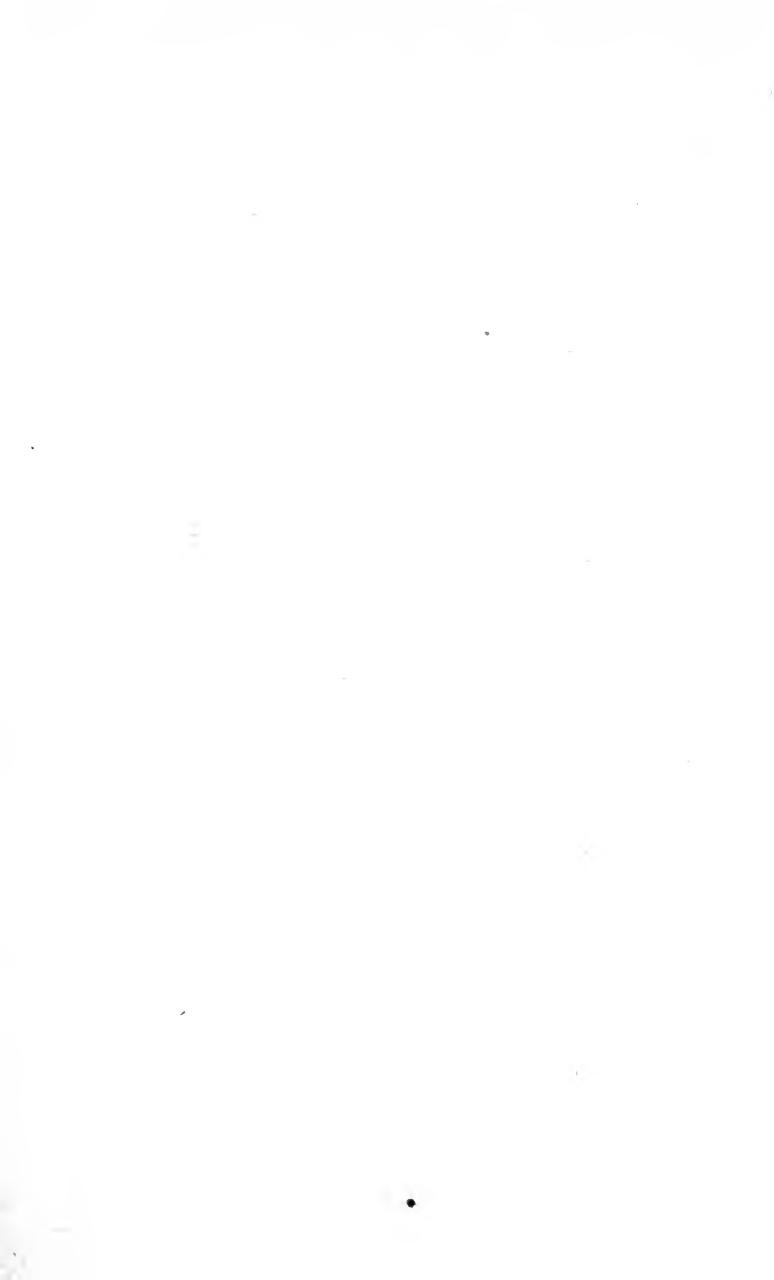




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# A BOOK OF VASSAR VERSE







A BOOK  
OF  
VASSAR VERSE

REPRINTS FROM  
THE VASSAR MISCELLANY MONTHLY  
1894-1916

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## PREFACE

In the selection of the verse in this volume, the editors had a twofold purpose: first and foremost to preserve verse of the highest possible standard of excellence; and secondly, to show through the collection the development of verse-making in the college since 1893, when a similar anthology was published. The poems have been arranged in chronological order, with reference to their appearance in *The Miscellany*, in order to make more evident the changing influences which have acted upon their authors, and the broadening scope of their themes. The book cannot fail to have a certain significance of symbolism, for in the lyric expression of the writers is apparent the widening range of the college girl's emotional and intellectual interest and the quickening of her contact with reality, as well as her increased power of expression.

In a measure the editors have sacrificed the historical to the aesthetic. Proportionately, recent poetry is more completely represented than that of the older magazines because it seems superior in variety and in finish. Because of this lack of proportion, the reader may not sense as keenly as did the compilers the contrast between the masses of conventional nature poetry and lullabies of the older school, and the varied richness of subject in the more modern songs. He may, however, watch imitation give way to interpretation, and thought and imagery deepen under the increasing grace of form. And he may trace to the end the spirit of courageous experiment, the reaching forth of young hands to new materials to be shaped into new forms.

The editors make no apology for including nonsense verse at the end of the volume, because it represents a definite phase of student life. To understand the life of a college without understanding the whimsies of its citizens is impossible.

The critic who condemns us for a sacrifice of dignity condemns the truthfulness of our volume. And he condemns something more—he condemns the spirit which says, “We have worked for a purpose, we have loved our work, and we have smiled.”

*Editors of the Vassar Miscellany Monthly 1916-1917.*



## A WALTZ BY CHOPIN

Far, far away  
We float upon a melody of sound;  
Blue sky above us, golden light around,  
And all the world one dreamy summer  
day.

Far, far away  
A bird's soft note breaks o'er the water,  
clear,  
The answering song reveals his mate  
is near,  
And then they join in warbling on their  
way.

Far, far away,  
Soft, softer grows the tender, dual strain,  
One last, faint note responsive comes  
again,  
Then silence falls. Breathless we wait  
in pain,  
But music, birds and spell have gone  
their way,  
Far, far away.

*E. H. Haight, 1894.*

## THE MAD POET

Mad, quite mad, they tell you? Ah, poor  
fools!

They little know of what they speak.

For see,

As no two sunsets ever were alike

Into whose gold the evening world was  
dripped,

As no two blossoms ever bloomed the  
same

Though grown so close that one the other  
touched,

So no two men. Go tell those prating  
fools

The divine difference is but more in-  
creased

Between themselves and me, and thus  
content

Their minds. \* \* \* \* \*

If one of them had ever felt the touch

'Neath which my soul has quivered since  
its birth,



He would not call me *mad*. That yearning  
love  
Which is the poet's food found place in  
me;  
And seized on all my little world contained  
To sate itself. With Nature's smile  
I smiled, and at her tears I wept. And  
then  
The love I bore all things was gathered  
in  
And centered on one being. Seemingly  
It greater grew in its intensity,  
And, looking in her eyes, I felt my heart  
Swell with a passion hitherto unknown,  
Swell until nigh to breaking, so that grief  
Stood next to joyfulness within my love.

Once, as we played, I drew a flower across  
Her smiling lips and flower-like face, and  
thought  
The while, her lids were lovelier far  
Than those down-drooping petals of the  
bloom;  
And thereon cast the fragile thing aside,  
And smiled to think how long that fairer  
flower

Would stay to cheer me, sent to brush  
away  
The blossom's gold that clung upon her  
cheeks  
With burning kisses. Each time when  
my lips  
Touched her dear face our souls seemed  
made as one  
And mingled in a flood of ecstasy!  
Again I kissed, and held the face away  
'Twixt both my hands, to view with  
ravished eyes  
The blushes that I knew o'erspread it.  
Fiend!  
What loathsome object met my madden-  
ed gaze!  
A face indeed—that self-same face de-  
formed  
By awful brands. \* \* \* \* \*

Oh Heavens! Every kiss had made a  
scar!  
Her eyes alone were radiant as before,  
But burned into my soul. Look! See  
them there—

There in that corner—here before my  
face!

Nothing but eyes, eyes, eyes—they pierce  
my flesh—

They scorch my heart out! Yes, they  
want my soul

To drag it down to Hell—O endless life  
Of torture! Savage, ceaseless misery!

\* \* \* \* \*

And so men call me mad?

*Nancy Vincent McClelland, 1897.*

## BEFORE THE DAWN

Before the dawn, when all the world's  
    asleep,  
And even little brooks forget to sing,  
The mother moon her faithful watch must  
    keep  
O'er all the stars. Her task it is to bring  
Her pretty children to their slumbering.  
She lays aside her own bright, golden  
    veil,  
Then draws upon each shining baby head  
A little night-cap, soft and very pale.  
Soon all the sky is dark, untenanted  
Before the dawn the star-babes go to bed.

*M. R., 1897.*

## NIGHT-WIND

I called to the Night-wind, the Night-  
wind sang "No",  
Tossing the elms and the willows;  
Then clasping the stars to her breast she  
swept low  
In her storm-flowing hair on the billows.

I called to the Night-wind, the Night-  
wind sighed "Yes",  
Mountain-tops golden were gleaming,  
Then I gathered her hair to me, tress by  
tress,  
The stars drooped, her eyes were dream-  
ing.

*Fanny Hart, 1898.*

## WHERE THE DEAD PAST SITS ENTHRONED

Dark are the shadows, dark the walls of  
stone

That close about her; silence over all.  
The dim light shows her regal figure, tall  
And stately, seated on an ancient throne.  
White-faced she is, and dead, and all  
alone.

A withered palm her nerveless hands let  
fall,

And white against the blackness of the  
wall

Shines out her hair, with cobwebs over-  
grown.

Wide are her eyes and straining through  
the gloom

Far searching always, but the rocks that  
loom

Throughout the void let never pilgrim  
nigh,

Nor voice e'er break the silence of that  
tomb,

But now and then the dead thing throned  
on high  
Sends through the darkness one great,  
shuddering cry.

*Emma Lou Garrett, 1899.*

## SUNSET

Now dark-eyed evening softly steals be-  
hind  
And hides the eyes of day with her cool  
hands,  
While lights and shadows play o'er mead-  
ow lands  
And up the hills, at sportive hood-man-  
blind.  
"Guess who am I?" with voice of mur-  
muring wind  
She softly asks. He falters, "Art thou  
night?"  
With loving smiles she doth his eyes un-  
bind,  
Herself revealing. He, in passion bright,  
Flames to an ecstasy of rapturous delight.

1901.



## LONELINESS

The earth's all wrapped in gray shroud-  
mist,

Dull gray are sea and sky,  
And where the water laps the land  
On gray sand-dunes stand I.  
Oh, if God there be, his face from me  
The rolling gray mists hide;  
And if God there be, his voice from me  
Is kept by the moan of the tide.

*Adelaide Crapsey, 1901.*

## WITH THE PASSING OF THE SUN

Dead is the sun king on his royal couch  
Of gold and purple; and the night monks  
come

And silently creep near it, one by one,  
And, sombre-robed, uplift their taper  
stars.

And in the darkness chant a requiem.

*Emma Lou Garrett, 1899.*

## A FRAGMENT

*(Supposed continuation of line 277, Book V, Odyssey)*

And Calypso, fair among nymphs, lovely  
with grace of goddess,  
Stood on the sands of the sea-beach and  
gazed far out on the ocean.  
There on the dark-colored sea, like a bird  
on the high-vaulted heaven,  
Sped the great barge of Odysseus, tossed  
by the surge of the waters.  
Smaller and smaller it grew, till at last  
she could see it no longer.  
There sat she down and wept, mournful  
she was, and despairing;  
Slowly the stars came out like torches  
proclaiming the night-fall,  
Shining till dimmed by Aurora, they sank  
to their bath in the billows.

But Calypso, fair among nymphs, sat  
on the sands of the sea-beach,  
Weeping and hiding her face from the sight  
of the pitiless ocean.

*Evelina Pierce, 1902.*

## DUTCH TULIPS

Acres of glowing color  
Stretching from dyke to stream,  
Lifting their blazing torches  
Bright as a fleeting dream;  
Like a flush of rose on the meadows,  
Or a blot of blood-red wine,  
Or a flaming field of cloth-of-gold,  
Is Holland, in tulip time!

*Mary Atwater Mason, 1902.*

## NOVEMBER

Quiet, at peace, in silent strength she  
    stands,  
The dull wind blowing on her rugged  
    face,  
Roughing her heavy hair; with sombre  
    grace  
Tall, leafless branches sway in her strong  
    hands;  
The rude burrs catch her dress, and thorny  
    vines  
Touched with the last deep color of the  
    year  
Cling to its hem, faded and frayed and  
    sear,  
Fringing the coarse, dusk folds with  
    fragile spines.  
A look far-seeing fills her wide, deep eyes,  
And the still light of long, gray after-  
    noon.

Bravely she waits the future, asks no  
boon,  
Hers the year's precious past, its golden  
memories.

*Letitia Jean Smyth, 1901.*

## SPRING SONG

The glad, mad hills  
All veined with rills,  
Are glowing a glory  
Of infinite green,  
And a lyric laughter flashes round  
With the onyx-emerald sheen.

To the birch foam toss,  
To the throb of the glade,  
To the pulse of the wheat,  
To the surge of the blade,  
To the beat of the flood,  
To the reel of the blood,  
Dance! lilt! swing!  
And off! Awing  
With the gold-throat oriole.

*Mary Fleming, 1902.*



## THROUGH WINTER WOODS

Gray mottled beech trunks locked in snow,  
And a muffled stillness all around;  
A stillness cut with the little smack  
Of a tiny twig a-springing back  
As a ball of snow with a breathy sound  
Drops from the iced green pines bent low.

Pale yellow shafts on a snow blue-white  
And a molten sun behind the hill;  
And thickening shadows under the trees  
And the sharp little sting of a sudden  
    breeze,  
As up from the crackled crusted rill  
Comes the clean-cut breath of the winter's  
    night.

*Margaret Adelaide Pollard, 1902.*

## THE SEER

To dwell alone in countries of the sun;  
To go all unaccompanied in the light;  
To see the valleys from a windy height,  
And long to rest therein, day being done.  
To weary of the beauties, one by one,  
That shine across the air too bleakly  
    bright;  
To be too close upon the stars by night.  
And, lonely as the peak, abide thereon!  
Immortal mind and mortal heart that  
    yearns,  
Grave wondrous soul to whom God speaks  
    his word,  
The skies are cold, and earth is warm with  
    love!  
Come for a space to where the hearth-  
    fire burns.  
And then if God's own voice should sound  
    unheard!  
Nay, thou shalt watch and wait and  
    dream thereof.

*Mary Burt Messer, S.*

## WHITE WINGS

She lingered for a while beside life's sea,  
Gathering strange, lovely thoughts to  
string like shells

In lyric lengths of song,  
Numbering the rhythmic beating of the  
deep,

Watching the soft, clear day steal from  
the east,

Or westward fading, touch the crinkling  
waves

With tender glory; and she saw the boats  
Glide with ribbed sails across the sun,  
and flit

Whit'ning through the blue distance,  
where afar

The heavenly country lies all wrapped  
in mist.

There most of all she gazed, and if a  
gleam

Threaded the mist, her passionate, grave  
eyes

With more than earthly lustre caught its  
light;  
Thus did she live until her soul took wing  
And vanished, like some white bird, in  
the blue.

*Elsie Mitchell Rushmore, 1906.*

## SONG OF AN IRISH MOTHER

Out 'cross the swamp and the mire  
The weirdies are flashin' their fire,  
An' down in the log-wood the soft rains  
    are fallin',  
Where the wee lonesome fairies are callin'  
    and callin',  
With voices that sound like yours,  
With voices that sound like yours.

Your daddy's old pipe's gettin' low,  
Where he sits in the hearth-fire's glow,  
And all 'round the thatch-roof the rain  
    spirit's swishin'  
While I'm waitin' here, darlin', a wishin'  
    an' wishin'  
You were back in this cradle o' yours,  
You were back in this cradle o' yours.

*Olive Stewart, 1908.*

## ELEMENTAL

*There are five elements of which all existing things  
are composed,—Earth, Air Fire, Water, and Ether*

*Japanese Legend.*

Driven wind on the gray hill's crest,  
Wandering breeze in the green marsh  
grass;

Measureless height and endless reach,  
Deepening blue of the open sky;

Flame,—the sweep of a red-hot scourge,  
And the licking tongue of the leaping fire:

Frolic of water over the stones;  
Limpid depths of a quiet pool:

The odor of fresh-turned earth in spring,  
Warm and virile and rich with life.

Passionate, vivid, wayward, free,  
Beloved, you're all of the world to me.

*Eliza Adelaide Draper, 1907.*

## THE CHORUS

Whisper to the moon-gleam,  
Whisper to the sea,  
Whisper to the moonbeam,  
Follow, follow me.

When the wind is in the willows,  
And the fireflies in the glen,  
And the moonlight on the pillows  
Of sleep-enamoured men,—

When the elves are in the forest,  
Seeking starshine in the dew,  
And their tiny tunes are chorused  
Where the starlight filters through;

Then, whisper to the moon-gleams,  
Whisper to the sea,  
Whisper to the moonbeams,  
Follow, follow me.

*Louise Medbery, 1907.*

## A PAGAN

I am a pagan, I!  
I worship earth and sun and sea and sky;  
I hold no faith, expressed in mankind's  
    words.  
My creed comes to me in the song of  
    birds,  
And waving grasses, and the sun's glad  
    light,  
And strong, high hills and rivers, silver-  
    bright,  
And soft, still clouds that silently float  
    by, —  
I am a pagan, I!

I never wonder why  
All men are born to sin, and then to die.  
I only love the whole great world around,  
And revel in its joy of sight and sound.  
I love it all,—I love, and long to praise  
The strange, great unknown Soul of it  
    always,



The Soul of earth and sun and sea and  
sky,—  
Am I a pagan, I?

*Beatrice Daw, 1909.*

## ON THE COAST OF MAINE

### I.

#### Off-Shore

The dappled blue of the evening sky,  
With the cloud-rack in the west,  
All purpled bright in the living light,  
Like the Islands of the Blest.

And out of the islands sweeps the wind  
As much as the sails can hold,  
As we race home through the rustling foam  
And the grey waves laced with gold.

### II.

#### In the Fog

The cool grey wraps us more and more,  
Our slack sail lifts to the fitful wind,  
And I see through the rift where the  
fog has thinned  
The floating ghost of the distant shore.

### III.

#### On the Sand-Bar

The curdling foam on the blue-black  
sands,  
The lap and splash of the rising tide,  
As it slowly creeps to the farther side,  
Where the lone tree stretches its ghostly  
hands.

### IV.

#### A Summer Storm

A leaden sea and a silver sky,  
A line of light at the sunset edge,  
Long wisps of cloud go drifting by,  
While the white foam licks at the rocky  
ledge.

Then the shouting sea-wind takes its toll?  
From the moaning forest's pain,  
And the storm sweeps by with the thun-  
der's roll,  
And the rattle of the rain.

## V.

### In the Pine-Woods

The sunlight through the pines  
Touches the mossy stones with living  
green,  
And marks the silver lines  
Left where the fairy spinner's way has  
been.

With tender murmuring  
The fragrant breezes steal from tree to  
tree,  
And now the vagrants bring  
The vital freshness of the distant sea.

## VI.

### Outward-Bound

The schooner's sail is slack and drawn  
And the schooner's wheel is still,  
And the sick prow lifts through the shift-  
ing seas,  
Like a thing bereft of will.

For the grey fog wraps us round, my lads,  
And the good ship needs must stay,  
Then hey and ho! for the bonny breeze,  
That drives the fog away.

There's a crinkling over the sluggish  
waves,  
A whispering in the sail,  
And the schooner turns like a tired dog,  
At the sound of his master's hail.

For the grey fog lifts off-shore, my lads,  
And the good ship bounds away.  
Then hey and ho! for the bonny breeze  
That drives the fog away.

*Louisa Brooke, 1907.*

## TO-NIGHT LIFE'S WEB SEEMED TWISTED ALL AWRY

To-night life's web seemed twisted all  
awry,  
Its faded colors trampled in the ground,  
Till here, within the darkening woods, I  
found  
This quiet pool beneath the starlit sky.  
The waters deeply still, the lissome reeds  
Scarce ruffling its smooth surface, the low,  
soft  
Monotonous murmur of the pines aloft,  
The very air a sweet contentment breeds.  
Above, a heron floats on softened wing.  
Deep in the woods a liquid-thrilling  
thrush  
Voices the dumb souled Night. And  
through the hush  
I feel your great, calm spirit comforting.  
The tangled webs grow straight. And  
now we seem  
Together, 'neath the stars, to sit and  
dream.

*Dorothea Gay, 1911.*

## WHERE THE WAVES MEET THE SHORE

My fingers touch the cool, firm sand,  
They let it sift between them, lovingly.  
The little waves, with rhythmic melody,  
Hush, and whisper, and break forth in  
gentle song,

As they splash in and out;  
As each recedes, the uncovered beach  
Is quickened with a life from out the west,  
And—like the dew drops on the faery  
webs

That breathe with color in the early morn—  
Each moment it receives the warm caress  
Of that far, radiant space beyond the sea,  
And, shimmering momentarily, gives back  
A quiet answer, with a flush  
Of soft dream fire.

*Katherine Taylor, 1910.*

## CHRISTMAS

Mother, just listen—town is sparkly  
    bright,  
    And windows full of gorgeous things,  
And holly, bundles, people—Oh, I saw  
    Such cunning angel's wings.

But out doors here it is so very still,  
    My stars are smiling far away,  
I can't tell why,—and then the little wind  
    Just kissed me, and won't say.

Mother, you're smiling like the people  
    too,  
    And like the little wind, and why  
Am I so very happy—just so glad,  
    And inside want to cry?

*Sarah Hincks, 1910.*



## FLUCTUATION

It lies o'er grain-fields surging in the  
breeze;  
On the dim wood-path in the glancing  
shift  
Of sunlight falling through the air-stirred  
trees;  
Or on the ocean in the breathless lift  
Of moon-tracked swells not risen to a  
wave;  
In autumn leaves revolving as they  
drift;  
In eyes, as Dante calls them, "slow and  
grave";  
In smiles of earnest men and human  
seers.—  
A certain rhythmic play of light and shade  
That weaves the shimmering fabric  
of our years.

*Hazel Bishop Poole, 1909.*

## THE SEA-SHORE

The sun is warm upon my back,  
As warm as mother's hand,  
And where I've dug my well to-day  
'There's water in the sand.

The Chinese boys down underneath,  
Are they as warm as me?  
The water half-way down my well  
Is cold as it can be.

*Ruth Elizabeth Presley, 1909.*

## IN THE HOSPITAL

These days when I am sick in bed—  
I've been in bed so long you know—  
I lie and listen to the steps  
And wonder where they go.

They hurry past out on the walk  
And hurry up the empty street,  
They're going home's *fast* they can,  
I know those happy feet.

Sometimes out in the corridor  
A nurse goes by with slow, soft slide;  
Sometimes she hurries—then I know  
Some boy like me, has died.

*Ruth Elizabeth Presley, 1909.*

## SUMMER WINDS

They rush along, the daughters of the  
wind,  
Grey-eyed, strong-limbed, their dust-  
brown hair swirled back.  
The children of the great warm west are  
they.  
One, high among the white cloud domes  
that hang  
So lazy in the sky, stirs them to life.  
Another skims across the grass that bends  
In silver waves beneath her scarce-felt  
tread.  
Then, darting up, past twinkling maple  
leaves,  
Bows down the tall elm's crown.  
But onward, ever onward still they rush,  
And meeting in the wood, sigh through  
the pines  
And pass and leave behind in drowsy  
heat,  
A breathless calm, close-wrapping like a  
shroud.

*Margaret Adams Hobbs, 1910.*

## FLITTER-MOTH

On the road to—Anywhere!—once I met  
her singing;  
Such a little elf was she,  
Winsome, full of witchery,  
Shy as any sprite could be,—  
Dancing, flitting, winging.

On the road to—Anywhere!—over hill  
and hollow,  
Where the little witch demure,  
Ever beckoning, doth lure,  
Weary, humble and obscure,  
I, her pilgrim, follow.

On the road to—Anywhere!—I will ne'er  
forsake her.  
Though the little witch may be  
Naught but errant Fantasy,  
Though she flout and mock at me,  
I will overtake her.

*Genevieve J. Williams, 1911.*

## MORNING ON THE RIVER

The river moves in silvery expanse,  
Soft-brushed with early mist along its  
    shores,  
Whose peaceful slopes lie slumbering dim  
    and gray,—  
While far above one glistening white gull  
    soars.

*Helen Lathrop, 1911.*

## THE POET'S MISTRESS SINGS

My love is not as other lovers are—  
He comes to me from planets more re-  
mote;  
The voice of distant worlds is in his  
throat,  
His eyes have caught the light of some  
strange star.

Such gifts he brings as queens in vain de-  
sire,  
Proud queens, for all their crowns of  
carven gold,  
Their silken robes, in lustrous fold on fold,  
For all their gems that flame like frozen  
fire. •

Their hearts cry vainly for the gifts he  
brings—  
Wild, winged songs that soar and flash  
and fall,

Dark, splendid songs, and beautiful and  
small  
Sweet songs that softly to my heart he  
sings.

For through the circling worlds he takes  
his flight,  
Seeking rare songs, that I, his love, may  
be  
Clothed in the subtle splendor of the sea,  
Crowned with the ancient glory of the  
night.

*Genevieve J. Williams, 1911.*



## EXILE

Alfalfa fields, at twilight purple-gray,  
Where western prairie bounds the curve  
of sky,—

A narrow road that has nor tree nor bend,  
A toiler from the mill who passes by.

A figure with a tinge of Old World grace,  
Deep color in the kerchief knotted free,  
Young eyes that hold a hint of Athens'  
gleam,—

A longing for a sunlit, azure sea.

*Marion Eleanor Crampton, 1911.*

## THE KNOT-HOLE

There's a whiff of dust comin' down the  
road,  
It's fairies in dust clouds that's  
blowin',  
Find a knot-hole to look at them through,  
boyneen,  
And their errand you'll be knowin'.

'Tis I had better be lookin' myself,  
Wurra, be keepin' behind—  
When the Little Men catch your eye  
through the knot,  
'Tis the black curse they give, strike  
you blind.

If they should bring me a changeling,  
now,  
'Tis a trouble for some one they're  
bearin',  
See the crooked, dancin' legs on them,  
And the scraps of coats they're wearin'.

Mother Mercy, did one of them see me  
then?

The crowd's gettin' distant and far,  
The corn crake is cryin'—it's day then,  
sure,

Boyneen, where is it you are!

*Margaret Frances Culkin, 1912.*

## SAXON LULLABY

Folded asleep are the hawthorne blows,  
And faint on the evening wind is the rose.  
Wriggle no more, little son, be still,  
For the Lord of Dreams waits here at the  
sill.

By-low-low.

Thou shalt ride this night on a milk-  
white steed,  
Shod by Weland with shoes of speed,  
Adown the gleaming Roman road,  
Its border with scarlet dream-blooms  
sowed,  
And the wind shall whistle through thy  
locks—  
But when thou hearest the surf on the  
rocks.  
Draw rein and remember thy mother at  
home.

Draw rein, turn back oh son of mine!  
Though sky is blue and white sails shine,

Though the ring-necked ships do thee  
courtesy,  
And in homage the sea-birds dip to the  
sea.

Trust not the slow waves heaving black;  
More men go out than e'er come back  
Over the gannet—road to Rome.

So, so! I meant not to fright thee, hush!  
The linnet is singing good-night to the  
thrush.

All out of doors is drowsy and gray,  
And I wait to speed thee on thy way.  
By-low-low.

*Dorothea Gay, 1911.*

## AFTERWARDS

I think you sent the withered leaves  
That blew all day across the grass,  
All day, all day they rustled by,  
A tattered, flying mass.

For all the world was whirling leaves  
Against the lonely, wind-swept sky,  
And every leaf was whispering  
Your name as it flew by.

Tonight the leaves lie quietly,  
Sodden and still beneath the rain  
That drums along the eaves, and drives  
Against the window pane.

*Genevieve J. Williams, 1911.*

## QUEEN'S LACE

Child! how high the brown weeds stand,  
Reaching up to touch your hand!  
Round your knees the Queen's lacedry  
Holds up cups as you pass by.  
You, who see the tiny elves  
In those seed-cups rock themselves,  
Tell the flowers to love me too,  
Reaching cups to me as you!

*Frances Shriver, 1911.*

## FROM THE DUSK

The dark'ning road had hidden you; I  
turned  
In dread to see the home we loved, but  
watched  
The garden changed to spirit; tinged trees  
That rose across the mist, or glowed like  
cloud  
About the lamps; a vague dim sky that  
made  
All distance nothing, even absence all  
Mistaken fear; then felt you close and  
groped—  
And struck my hand against the iron  
gate.

*Elizabeth Toof, 1913.*



## PIERRETTE

Ah, Pierrette! I see thee dance  
Amid the maskers gay.  
With piquant poise, with witching glance,  
As sweetly pale a face  
As an arbutus bud in May,  
Save for the scarlet lips,  
So laughing light with wind-swayed grace  
Through music's maze you trip.

Ah, Pierrette! I know thy heart,  
A burning crimson rose  
By folly's rude hand plucked apart  
To many a bleeding shred,  
Robbed of its bloom by sorrow's snows.  
One night when I was near,  
"Ah, God! I wish that I were dead,"  
You whispered in my ear.

*Helen Clark, 1913.*

## THE WIND SONG

I am the child of the sea—  
I sweep the purple fog on its landward  
track,  
I cry in the thundering roar of the ocean  
surge,  
I beat the crests of the towering waves to  
foam,  
And dash them down to burst on the angry  
reefs;  
I tear the sea-weed black from the salt-  
sprayed rock,  
I lash the stark brown cliffs with hissing  
surf,  
I toss and buffet the treasure-laden  
ships,  
And strip the taut-stretched sail from the  
shivering mast,  
And strew the waste of waves with their  
golden spoils,  
And hurl them up to rot on the strangers'  
shore,  
And mock at the hopes of men.

I am the child of the land—  
I whistle in whirling dust through the  
city street,  
I shriek through the rigid frame of slender steel,  
Looming black and bare to the cold green sky;  
I batter the thousand panes with shower of hail,  
Sweeping the roof and the cornice heaped with snow;  
I blow o'er the rolling prairies' inland sea,  
Where the fields of corn lie red in the evening light,  
And the deepening purple shadows creep to the east,  
As the curling smoke cloud beckons the laborer home;  
I rush o'er the western ranges wide and clear,  
With the sage brush green and gray in the morning sun,  
The rock-red soil and the brown of the stunted pine;  
I sing in the rhythmic beat of the broncho's hoofs,

The blast of the surging stream that  
    seeks for gold,  
The thud of the axe as it swings in the  
    clearing green;  
I moan through the desert's awful silences,  
Where the cold gray rocks, 'mid the miles  
    of barren brush,  
From a level sea loom gaunt to the ghostly  
    moon;  
I howl in the roar of the train with its  
    shower of fire,  
The piercing engine's shriek through the  
    black ravine,  
The wild coyote's cry to the lonely stars;  
I sweep o'er the empty wastes of sand,  
    and yearn  
For the finite souls of men.

*Henriette de Saussure Blanding, 1912.*

## AFTER THE SEASON

Untrampled lies the sand, smooth, hard  
and clean,

Scattered with gleaming yellow cockle  
shells

And bits of grey drift-wood. The cool  
air smells

Freshly of salt, most when the wind blows  
keen

From off south-lying fishing banks. Se-  
rene

The pale blue sky bends down to meet  
the swells

That set the buoys aswing and toll the  
bells,

Then break upon the bar, wild white and  
green.

The bathing beach is marked by rope-  
less posts;

The vacant board-walk stretches dull  
and bare.

The Old Casino's shuttered windows  
stare

Half-crazed by sighing of the uneasy  
ghosts  
Of tunes the band used, summer long,  
to play,—  
Far out at sea one ship's smoke fades  
away.

*Helen Dorothea Romer, 1912.*

## SLEEP SONG OF THE PINES

Dimness and dusky bars  
Drift on the branches' light;  
Dearer than song are stars,  
Dearer than day is night.

Moon-quivers pale and long  
Meet on the mosses gray.  
Dearer is dream than song,  
Dearer is night than day.

*Elizabeth Toof, 1913.*

## TRISTRAM

For me, Iseult, the shadows of your hair  
Hold all the dusky sweetness of the night,  
Your eyes the joy of all the shining stars.  
Deep in your voice the comfort of the rain,  
The warmth and vibrant stillness of noon  
suns

Lie folded, as in promise of the Spring.  
I can not let you go! Your loss would be  
The loss of all the meaning that is Life.

Yet—sometimes when the night wind  
holds her breath  
A voice cries through the darkness: "*This*  
is Death!"

*Elizabeth Mason Heath, 1916.*



## ALYTH

Naked as sun-fleck she treads the brook,  
Trailing the water weed tangled there;  
Glow of her hair make the shadows blind;  
Teased by her laughter the winds despair.

Stain of the rushes and tear of thorn  
Darken her feet in the water's flow;  
Glimmers that fall from her breast and  
hair  
Mingle and stir like a lily's glow.

*Elizabeth Toof, 1913.*

## WINDS AND THE LILIES

I wish I were the wind that blows  
In the wood-lilies,  
And bends and breaks them and then  
goes.

What of the broken lilies then? Who  
knows,  
For who thinks twice of anything the  
wind

Has torn and thinned!  
Deep golden petals scattered on the air  
Drift here and there—  
Deep tawny golden—more like Inyr's  
hair

Than anything I've dreamed of; she is  
pale

And slim and frail  
As the slenderest lily-stalks Heaven knows.

I wish I were the wind that blows  
In the wood-lilies  
And bends and breaks them and then  
goes.

*Helen Lombaert Scobey, 1913.*

## FROM HOMER

“Homer, thy song men liken to the sea,  
With every note of music in his tone,  
With tides that wash the wide dominion  
Of Hades, and light waves that lash in  
    glee,  
Around the isles enchanted. \* \* \* \* \*”

Before me sweeps the dark and widening  
    sea  
And wistfully, I strain my eyes across the  
    waves  
To glimpse the sturdy, wing-sailed ship  
    that bears  
My son again to Ithaca \* \* \* a fair  
    haired lad,  
Boy to the battle-famed Odysseus, who  
    had  
But lately left his play, to sail  
To far off Ilium, o’er the deep’ning sea.  
How long the years have been; how  
    heavy-winged!

The lad mayhap has changed; his eyes  
less young,  
His voice less full of joyous mirth;  
His heart—oh Zeus immortal, give to me  
His heart as sweet, as when he played at  
ball  
Beside me in the sunny megaron \* \* \* \*  
While I plied back and forth to spin for  
him  
A kiton from new-carded wool \* \* \* \*  
How long the watch is; and how dark the  
sea.

*Rebecca Park Lawrence, 1913.*

## A PRAYER TO BUDDHA

The wind has blown against my face  
A leaf of mist-wet bloom.

*In calm of depthless thinking, look forever  
Upon the leaves of lake-lapped lotus  
flowers,*

*No chanting from thy temples break thy  
musing;*

*Nor prayer bells mark the silence into hours.*

*But when the smoke of sandal-wood is  
rising*

*From Temples where the throbs of chant-  
ing cease,—*

*Because that scent once stilled thy prayer  
to silence,*

*Upon thy people lay the spell of peace.*

The wind has blown against my face  
A leaf of mist-wet bloom.

*Elizabeth Toof, 1913.*

## THE ABBEY BELLS OF MIDDEL- BURG

At Middelburg the night drags slow  
Because the chimes are never still,  
But mark the quarters as they go  
With carillons unending, shrill.  
You hear the bells at Middelburg,  
The Abbey bells of Middelburg,  
Until it seems the live-long night  
Is full of bells at Middelburg.

You may have visions between bells  
Of Rosendaal with hedge-rimmed fields,  
Or Dort with Docks, or somewhere else  
With long low-lying poppy fields,  
Or Domburg's dykes and windmill wings—  
But these are visions that give place  
As night creeps on to sadder things,  
While quarters drag and bells keep pace.

When hope is dead and sleep is vain.  
And thoughts are mad, but dreams are  
worse,

And every chime smites like a pain,  
And carillons become a curse,  
You hear the bells at Middelburg,  
The shrill high bells at Middelburg,  
Until you think the live-long night  
Is cursed with bells at Middelburg.

*Helen Lombaert Scobey, 1913.*

## TO A STRANGER

I have seen you arise and go forth in the  
    night  
And run up a white winding way  
To the top of a hill, through the grass under stars,  
Where you chased the wild wind in your  
    play.

You were mad when you tossed back your  
    bare head and laughed,  
When you caught at a star in its fall,  
It changed to a glimmering moth and  
    flew by,—  
O tonight, when you pass, will you call?

*Ruth Thomas Pickering, 1914.*



## LOVE SONG

I love you with a heart that dances in  
the sunshine,  
That sings the strangest wildness of a  
wild blue wave,  
That trembles in the fierce sweep of a  
green streaked wind storm,  
When pine trees break and lost birds cry,  
and sky-topped rock cliffs cave.

I wait for you where clouds stretch pale  
and far off northward.  
Where fruits red ripe are hanging breath-  
less in noon light,  
Where yellow birds are flying over purple  
flowers.  
Where grasses blow with restless yearn-  
ing all the long white night.

*Ruth Thomas Pickering, 1914.*

## O, I WENT DOWN TO THE RIVER BANK

O, I went down to the river bank  
Last night  
When a million stars were bright  
And you in the long grass lay.

O, the wind blew over the river bank  
Last night  
And the touch of your lips was light  
As we in the long grass lay.

O, I came up from the river bank  
Alone,  
While the weary wind made moan  
And the dawn on the crushed grass lay.

*Ruth Thomas Pickering, 1914.*

## EVENING

When Evening first, rising from day-long  
rest,  
Cups her slow hands 'round Day's too  
dazzling light,  
Still through her fingers slips a radiance  
bright  
Reddening and spreading in the darken-  
ing west.  
She sighs; and in the fragrant dusk, the  
breeze  
Makes whispered music through the qui-  
vering trees;  
Then strengthening Night snuffs out the  
Day's last spark  
And sets the first star shimmering in the  
dark.

*Carolyn Crosby Wilson, 1917.*

## PERSEPHONE TO ORPHEUS

I do remember now a far off day  
And long-forgotten in this frozen place,—  
A gleam of sunlit flowers, wet with spray,  
And the long sea beach whitening for  
    a space  
Between the green land and the purple  
    sea.  
The black car hurtles through the startled  
    air.  
Forever mingled with my young despair  
The sharp tang of the sea-salt strangles  
    me.  
Singer, your song has waked to life again  
The dear lost gift of tears, and all the  
    whirl  
Of quick-pulsed love and hatred. Sweet  
    is pain  
To one long dead to passion,—Take the  
    girl!

*Elizabeth Mason Heath, 1916.*

## INTERIM

*A man speaks*

The room is full of you!—As I came in  
And closed the door behind me, all at once  
A something in the air, intangible,  
Yet stiff with meaning, struck my senses  
sick!—

Sharp, unfamiliar odors have destroyed  
Each other room's dear personality.

The heavy scent of damp, funereal flowers,  
The very essence, hush-distilled, of Death,  
Has strangled that habitual breath of  
home

Whose expiration leaves all houses dead;  
And whereso'er I look is hideous change.  
Save here. Here 'twas as if a weed-  
choked gate

Had opened at my touch, and I had stepped

Into some long-forgot, enchanted, strange,  
Sweet garden of a thousand years ago

And suddenly thought, "I have been here  
before!"

You are not here. I know that you are  
gone,

And will not ever enter here again.

And yet it seems to me, if I should speak,  
Your silent step must wake across the  
hall;

If I should turn my head, that your sweet  
eyes

Would kiss me from the door.--So short  
a time

To teach my life its transposition to  
This difficult and unaccustomed key!--

The room is as you left it; your last touch  
A thoughtless pressure, knowing not it-  
self

As saintly--hallows now each simple  
thing;

Hallows and glorifies, and glows between  
The dust's gray fingers like a shielded  
light.

There is your book, just as you laid it  
down,

Face to the table,—I cannot believe  
That you are gone!—Just then it seemed  
to me  
You must be here. I almost laughed to  
think  
How like reality the dream had been;  
Yet knew before I laughed, and so was  
still.

That book, out-spread, just as you laid  
it down!  
Perhaps you thought, “I wonder what  
comes next,  
And whether this or this will be the end,”  
So rose and left it, thinking to return.

Perhaps that chair, when you arose and  
passed  
Out of the room, rocked silently a while  
Ere it again was still. When you were  
gone  
Forever from the room, perhaps that  
chair,  
Stirred by your movement, rocked a little  
while,  
Silently to and fro \* \* \* \* \*

And here are the last words your fingers  
wrote,  
Scrawled in broad characters across a  
page  
In this brown book I gave you. Here  
your hand,  
Guiding your rapid pen, moved up and  
down.  
Here with a looping knot you crossed a  
“t”,  
And here another like it, just beyond  
These two eccentric “e’s”. You were  
so small,  
And wrote so brave a hand!

How strange it seems  
That of all words these are the words  
you chose!  
And yet a simple choice; you did not  
know  
You would not write again. If you had  
known—  
But then, it does not matter,—and in-  
deed,  
If you had known there was so little time  
You would have dropped your pen and  
come to me,



And this page would be empty, and some  
phrase

Other than this would hold my wonder  
now.

Yet, since you could not know, and it  
befell

That these are the last words your fingers  
wrote,

There is a dignity some might not see

In this, "I picked the first sweet-pea to-  
day."

To-day! Was there an opening bud be-  
side it

You left until tomorrow?—O, my love,

The things that withered,—and you came  
not back!

That day you filled the circle of my arms

That now is empty. (O, my empty life!)

That day—that day you picked the first  
sweet-pea,—

And brought it in to show me! I recall

With terrible distinctness how the smell

Of your cool gardens drifted in with you.

I know, you held it up for me to see

And flushed because I looked not at the  
flower  
But at your face; and when behind my  
look  
You saw such unmistakable intent.  
You laughed and brushed your flower  
against my lips.  
(You were the fairest thing God ever  
made,  
I think.) And then your hands above  
my heart  
Drew down its stem into a fastening,  
And while your head was bent I kissed  
your hair.

I wonder if you knew. (Beloved hands!  
Somehow I cannot seem to see them  
still.  
Somehow I cannot seem to see the dust  
In your bright hair.) What is the need  
of Heaven  
When earth can be so sweet?—If only  
God  
Had let us love,—and show the world the  
way!

Strange cancelings must ink the eternal  
books

When love-crossed-out will bring the  
answer right!

That first sweet pea! I wonder where it  
is.

It seems to me I laid it down somewhere,  
And yet,—I am not sure. I am not sure,  
Even, if it was white or pink; for then  
'Twas much like any other flower to me,  
Save that it was the first. I did not  
know,

Then, that it was the last. If I had  
known—

But then it does not matter. Strange  
how few,

After all's said and done, the things that  
are

Of moment.

Few indeed! When I can make  
Of ten small words a rope to hang the  
world!

“I had you and I have you now no more.”

There, there it dangles,—where's the  
little truth  
That can for long keep footing under  
that  
When its slack syllables tighten to a  
thought?  
Here, let me write it down! I wish to  
see  
Just how a thing like that will look on  
paper!

*"I had you and I have you now no more."*

O, little words, how can you run so  
straight  
Across the page, beneath the weight you  
bear?  
How can you fall apart, whom such a  
theme  
Has bound together, and hereafter aid  
In trivial expression that have been  
So hideously dignified?—Would God  
That tearing you apart would tear the  
thread

I strung you on! Would God—O, God,  
my mind

Stretches asunder on this merciless rack  
Of imagery! O, let me sleep awhile!

Would I could sleep, and wake to find me  
back

In that sweet summer afternoon with  
you.

Summer? 'Tis summer still by the calen-  
dar!

How easily could God, if he so willed,  
Set back the world a little turn or two!  
Correct its griefs, and bring its joys  
again!

We were so wholly one I had not thought  
That we could die apart. I had not  
thought

That I could move,—and you be stiff and  
still!

That I could speak,—and you perforce  
be dumb!

I think our heart-strings were, like warp  
and woof

In some firm fabric, woven in and out;

Your golden filaments in fair design  
Across my duller fibre. And today  
The shining strip is rent; the exquisite  
Fine pattern is destroyed; part of your  
heart

Aches in my breast; part of my heart lies  
chilled

In the damp earth with you. I have been  
torn

In two, and suffer for the rest of me.

What is my life to me? And what am I  
To life,—a ship whose star has guttered  
out?

A Fear that in the deep night starts awake  
Perpetually, to find its senses strained  
Against the taut strings of the quivering  
air,

Awaiting the return of some dread chord?

Dark, Dark, is all I find for metaphor;  
All else were contrast,—save that con-  
trast's wall

Is down, and all opposed things flow to-  
gether

Into a vast monotony; where night  
And day, and frost and thaw, and death  
and life,  
Are synonyms. What now—what now  
to me  
Are all the jabbering birds and foolish  
flowers  
That clutter up the world? You were  
my song!  
Now, now let discord scream! You were  
my flower!  
Now let the world grow weeds! For I  
shall not  
Plant things above your grave; (the com-  
mon balm  
Of the conventional woe for its own  
wound!)

Amid sensations rendered negative  
By your elimination stands to-day,  
Certain, unmixed, the element of grief;  
I sorrow; and I shall not mock my truth  
With travesties of suffering, nor seek  
To effigy its incorporeal bulk  
In little wry-faced images of woe.

I cannot call you back; and I desire

No utterance of my material voice.  
I cannot even turn my face this way  
Or that, and say, "My face is turned to  
you;"

I know not where you are, I do not know  
If Heaven hold you or if earth transmute,  
Body and soul, you into earth again;  
But this I know:—not for one second's  
space

Shall I insult my sight with visionings  
Such as the credulous crowd so eager-  
eyed

Beholds, self-conjured, in the empty air.  
Let the world wail! Let drip its easy  
tears!

My sorrow shall be dumb!  
What do I say?  
God! God!—God pity me! Am I gone mad  
That I should spit upon a rosary?  
Am I become so shrunken? Would to  
God

I too might feel that frenzied faith whose  
touch

Makes temporal the most enduring grief;  
Tho' it must walk a while, as is its wont,



With wild lamenting! Would I too might  
    weep  
Where weeps the world and hangs its  
    piteous wreaths  
For its new dead! Not Truth, but Faith,  
    it is  
That keeps the world alive. If all at  
    once  
Faith were to slacken,—that unconscious  
    faith  
Which must, I know, yet be the corner-  
    stone  
Of all believing—, birds now flying fearless  
Across would drop in terror to the earth;  
Fishes would drown; and the all-govern-  
    ing reins  
Would tangle in the frantic hands of God  
And the worlds gallop headlong to des-  
    truction!

O, God I see it now,, and my sick brain  
Staggers and swoons! How often over me  
Flashes this breathlessness of sudden  
    sight  
In which I see the universe unrolled

Before me like a scroll and read thereon  
Chaos and Doom, where helpless planets  
whirl

Dizzily round and round and round and  
round,

Like tops across a table, gathering speed  
With every spin, to waver on the edge  
One instant—looking over—and the next  
To shudder and lurch forward out of  
sight—

\* \* \* \* \*

Ah, I am worn out—I am wearied out—  
It is too much—I am but flesh and blood,  
And I must sleep. Tho' you were dead  
again,

I am but flesh and blood and I must sleep.

*Edna St. Vincent Millay, 1917.*

## SWING IN THE SWING

Swing in the swing and imagine,  
Swing in the swing and suppose,  
'Magine if I was a lady  
Havin' a train to my clothes,

I'd never stop eating candy,  
I'd never go up to bed,  
And when they talked about secrets  
I wouldn't be sent on ahead.

Swing in the swing and imagine,  
Swing in the swing and p'tend,  
Swing in the swing and whoop-ti-oh—  
Jump to the ground in the end.

*Violet Gurney, 1915.*

## THE APPRENTICE

The devil take these foolish meek madonnas—

Their simpering smiles! Pray look at this one now

There, grinning in the darkness, on her brow

The crown of heaven, and that silly face  
Such as the people like to see, the fools!

Gemma who sells the flowers on the bridge

And those girls washing linen in the pools

Have more of life, of beauty, of true grace,

Well fit to be God's mother. Andrea

Knows how to please the populace. I  
hear

Him bargaining "Mother and Child, so  
much

And so much added for each saint "—he's  
dear—

It's just like selling cloth. Passion of  
God!

To sell your soul by the square foot! and  
yet

It would not be so hard could I forget  
That damned soft smile on angel, saint  
and queen;  
If I could bring in Gemma for an hour  
And sing to her the song I learned last  
night,  
And while she laughed out loud, had I  
the power,  
I'd paint her in, large-mouthed, and  
strong and keen  
If not as Mary, at least, Magdalene.

*Elizabeth Jane Coatsworth, 1915.*

## CHANSON

My melody at first was slow and round:  
Then, breaking too much sweetness, a  
    great chord  
Crashed out, swept up, and all its color  
    poured  
Into a slender, dwindling, minor sound,  
That rippled into froth. Again the quiet  
    roll  
Of steady notes that surged into a crest  
Hung, dropped, and melted with the rest  
Into an end that sang within the soul.  
I laughed aloud, for eagle-winged and  
    bright  
I'd sent you flashing through my mighty  
    song.  
I played it to my friends. They waited  
    long,  
Then called it "pretty" .....ah! the  
    night  
That chilled me, struck my senses numb,  
And made my song of you, forever—dumb.

*Katharine Schermerhorn Oliver, 1915.*

## THE DRAGON LAMP

That night we talked across a table's  
space,  
And with a tale of knight and nun I  
sought  
To please you. "These pale broideries,"  
I thought,  
"This quaint, sweet, measured story will  
efface  
Her restlessness." Meanwhile with list-  
less grace  
Of curving wrist and cool white hand, you  
wrought  
Havoc amid the lamp's red fringe; you  
caught  
The sinuous dragon pattern on the base,  
With drooping glance retraced it. Once,  
forgetting  
My silver tale a breathless instant, letting  
Your widening eyes sink through the  
morphean maze

To where in dim, deep bronze your own  
tense gaze  
Answered, you shrank back from the glow  
afraid.  
“The nun can’t have been young,” you  
softly said.

*Louise Hunting Seaman, 1915.*



## LONDON CHIMNEY POTS

London, London chimney pots,  
In the twilight sky,  
Rows and rows of chimney pots  
To mark the houses by.  
Pleasant London chimney pots  
Looking down at me,  
Can you smell the jasmine  
By my apple tree?

Can you hear the children sing  
T'other side my hedge,  
Singing to the baby moon  
Showing one white edge,  
"Hokey pokey starlight  
Round the moon you go"—  
London, London chimney pots,  
Is't a song you know?

*Vivian Gurney, 1915.*

## MAN MENDING A PIPE

The lowbrowed tunnel is baking black  
With a grimy blackness that smears his  
face,  
And dries his nose with its blasting stench,  
And pushes his eye-balls out of their  
place;  
All in the gulp of a breath.  
He drinks it down till this dusty death  
Is the native life of his dusty lungs.  
The thin blood pounds in his crowded  
head,  
Or the hot steam batters against the  
bungs;  
It's all the same in the choking dark.  
The spot-light cleaves a finger-mark  
And wavers against the retreating night.  
The steam pipes and their shadows crawl,  
Little and big, against the wall,  
From the roughcast ceiling spiders fall,  
And pale bugs scuttle out of the light.  
He crouches onward a weary space,

Searches and finds the broken pipe.  
His hot eyes strain on the tiny crack,  
The darkness presses against his back,  
Eternity hangs between the clack  
Of one steam-pipe and the next.

Low and dusty and close and flat,  
The tunnel stifles him in its gripe.  
He shares its life with his brother the rat—  
His work of the world in a broken pipe.

*Elizabeth Mason Heath, 1916.*

## LOVE SONG

There are some things too wonderful to  
tell;  
Sunset, red-gold, across a waveless sea;  
'Twixt pool and pool a glen-stream's  
revelry;  
The morning star's pale fire and breath-  
less spell;  
And so I cannot say how wonderful you  
are.

There are some things too beautiful to  
know;  
The silver song the shimmering planets  
sing;  
What the tall bending birch is whisper-  
ing;  
How sunlight kisses the shy buds a-blow.  
So I can only guess your beauty from  
afar!

*Carolyn Crosby Wilson, 1917.*

## CIRCE

He stood before her tall and very strong.  
The swine and tigers crouched about her  
feet

And licked them.

His glance upon her was indifferent,  
Whereat her gray eyes blazed with sudden joy,

Eager she stretched her arms out, radiant,  
Her mouth grown sweet and tender, all  
her form

Trembling with hope. Her very smile  
rejoiced,

Then quivered at his kindled look.

E'er he had reached the spot where yet  
she stood

Her joy had smouldered out.

"Your eyes are like a beast's," young  
Circe said.

*Elizabeth Jane Coatsworth, 1915.*

## THE LOVER

Ah yes  
My dearest,  
How well I guess  
That your slim soul  
Reaches out shyly  
Toward that same goal  
Whence mine has fled.  
I panted to the heights and found that  
there  
Though brave my aim, my soul  
Eternity without you did not dare.  
Well, we are here together, just for once.  
Your eyes brush past me straining to the  
height,  
While I who won and lost because of you,  
Powerless watch you pass.  
I scorn your purity,  
Your eager zeal.  
I long to feel  
Life surge about me,

Not forget,  
As you forget me here.  
You are a holy fool.  
And yet I love you.

*Elizabeth Jane Coatsworth, 1915.*

*Katharine Schermerhorn Oliver, 1915.*

## REBELLION

Always when Absalom returned at night,  
Tired from hunting, yet adventure-filled,  
'Twas Michal met him in the darkened  
court,

Gave him his wine and listened to his  
tales.

Seldom looked she at him from lowered  
lids

But slow spoke words of praise he learned  
to love.

When at bright noon he wandered in the  
groves

Or lay in meditation 'neath a tree  
Michal would chance to meet him as she  
walked—

Michal, the queen, daughter of Saul was  
she.

David, the king, never beheld her face  
Since she rebuked him; yet she never  
wept

For that she lived a widow while a wife--



She never spoke of those her five young  
    sons  
Whom David gave to death, nor of her  
    house  
Whose very name was seldom on men's  
    lips  
So it had fallen before David's power—  
Instead,  
She listened to the tales of David's son,  
Her white face near his eager beauteous-  
    ness—  
Or told him he was fair that he was  
    strong,  
The people loved him more than the  
    King's self,  
It was a grief to her he was not heir.  
And while she spoke with lips that scarce-  
    ly moved,  
Her eyes kept watch of him 'neath lower-  
    ed lids.

*Elizabeth Jane Coatsworth, 1915.*

## CATHLEEN NI HOULIHAN

*(In imitation of the poems of Egan O'Rahilly)*

When the yellow sun set on the hill  
And the mist crept up from the meadow  
Did you see the Lady Cathleen,  
As you came from the west, from the  
moorland?

It was close by the wind-swept dune,  
At sunset I saw her.  
Fair is she, fair among maidens.  
The red of her hair is the color  
Of willows when comes the March wind,  
Bringing Spring in her bosom.  
Her eyes, ah who can describe them  
Save one who has seen in the dark fairy  
well of Killaha  
Heaven reflected, a flame in still water?  
When she smiled my heart sang with  
delight;  
When she weeps—ah then I die for her.

*Miriam S. Wright, 1918.*

## THE DEFIANCE OF LILITH

Swift searched they the universe, track-  
ing down Lilith—

Sennoi, Sansennoi and Sammargeloph,  
God-sent and terrible, bright-winged with  
fire

Searched they for Lilith who dared defy  
Godhead,

Utter Shem-hamphorash, Dread Name  
of Names,

And, armed with might by that word un-  
speakable

Scorned great Jehovah, cursed Adam's  
seed—

Adam who hated her, loved her, and  
fawned to her—

Then disappeared from the eyes of the  
Lord.

Fearing her power, remembering her  
beauty,

The strong fierce will of her, turned they  
from Eden

Left Adam smiling, Eve close beside  
him—

Through the three worlds searched they  
for Lilith,

Sennoi, Sansennoi and Sammargeloph.

*Elizabeth Jane Coatsworth, 1915.*

## AUTUMN

Spring, teasing cumbrous Winter from  
her place,

First charms me with her ever changing  
face,

Now with a tear, yet oftener with a smile  
She doth beguile

My dancing feet

Into some pleasant, blossom-bowered re-  
treat.

And yet, when lazy, lavish Summer lies  
And smiles upon me through her half-  
closed eyes,

Smiles welcome to her wide, reclining  
fields,

Then my heart yields

To her sly wooing,

And drowsy minstrels shrill my sweet  
undoing.

Until, one day, I catch the sudden flare  
Of glorious Autumn's wind-blown, flam-  
ing hair.

Her swift step stirs the rustling leaves,  
and then

I meet again

The wishful glow

Of steady, azure eyes; and straightway  
go

Into glad arms, outstretched, yet wearied  
not

With long desire, and only half forgot.

Then Spring and Summer child and wan-  
ton are,

And Autumn my true love returned from  
afar.

*Carolyn Crosby Wilson, 1917.*

## THE DREAMER

I ride on the riotous clouds of dawn  
And the roughened waves of the sea.  
I know how the horns of the moon are  
    made  
And the grey crag's mystery.  
Borne aloft by the whirlwind's rage  
I rush through eternity.

*Elsie Lanier, 1918.*

*Puer quis ex aula capillis  
Ad cyathum statuetur unctis,  
Doctus sagittas tendere Sericas  
Arcu paterno*

Horace C. I. 29.

Sometimes while passing round the fragrant wine

Fierce memory strikes. Quivering, he stands erect,

Longing to tear aside the tunic soft,

Fling on instead the roughened tiger skin,

To dash the marble cup upon the ground,  
And free, to force a way to Seric plains—

But stifling breath of many-petalled rose  
Envelops him. He droops, until he meets  
The narrow smile of some dark Latin girl,

Onward he glides, off'ring with servile grace

Pomegranates, grapes, and sweet Falerian.

*Agnes Rogers, 1916.*



## PROLOGUE

*(From the Pageant of Athena. Written and presented  
by the Students of Vassar College at their Fiftieth  
Anniversary Exercises, October, 1915.)*

*Athena speaks :*

Bright in the skein of time gleam many  
strands,

Endlessly varied. I have chosen those  
Of flame, of fire, of rich luxuriant gold,  
And those whose beauty lies in their clear  
strength.

My will it is to weave them, strand on  
strand,

Tracing the course of learning through  
the years

In one close wrought design. All those  
who come

Shall pause before this fabric, ages old,  
Shaped by past lives in symmetry and  
truth,

And glorying in design so well begun,  
Themselves shall add thereto. And this  
my web  
Shall weaving be forever, never done.

## ALTA MATER

What gifts ask we at thy fair hands?  
Thy love what grace imparts?  
The will to dare, the hand to do,  
Thy light within our hearts.

High, Mother, is thy heart,  
As thy gray tower's height.  
Strong, Mother, are thy hands,  
Thy torch burns ever bright.

What gifts lay we at thy fair feet,  
Since we are greatly blest?  
Our strength, our hope, to bear thy light  
Undimmed from east to west.

High, Mother, is thy heart,  
As thy gray tower's height.  
Strong, Mother, are thy hands,  
Thy torch burns ever bright.

*Elizabeth Mason Heath, 1916.*

## DAWN

At the feet of his lady the moon  
Lies the night.  
Aquiver and breathless and bright,  
With the light  
Of her smile on his face,  
And the shadows her slim fingers trace.

And now she is gone, and he lies  
Black browed and brooding and still;  
And over the hill  
From afar  
The clear morning star  
Burns but to set him a-thrill.  
But the night steals away  
Seeking his lady, and leaves the star, pal-  
ing, with day.

*Carolyn Crosby Wilson, 1917.*

## THE SANDMAN

He catches dust o' dreams to carry in his  
sack,

The dust a falling star leaves shining  
in its track,

He walks the milky-way, then down the  
dark-staired skies,

His tinkling footsteps hush the world  
with lullabies.

And when he reaches you, his fragrant  
gentle hands

Fill deep your drowsy eyes with fairy  
golden sands.

*Helen Johnson, 1918.*

## THE FAIRY RING

The fairies' ring is up in the night sky  
Around the moon;  
And little moonbeams silently dance by  
In silver shoon.  
The star lamps glow,  
The wind sings low  
A lullaby,  
A fairy tune.  
But all the woodland people sigh  
For their lost happy ring, and long to fly  
To the white moon.

*Elizabeth Keller, 1916*

## ALONE

Under the misty sky, low-hanging, gray,  
The hills stretched, dark and still in the  
half light;

The wet air, scented like an April night  
With marshy sweetness, on our parched  
lips lay—

Unbroken silence save for the light stir  
Of dry, dead grass,

And once, along the forest edge, the whirl  
Of a gray partridge startled into flight—  
I felt the quiet pass

Like balm into my heart. For grief that  
burned

But yesterday, in the mad land of human  
ills,

Here was no place.

Instinctively I turned

To you—and found you staring at the  
hills

And saw the fierce world-hunger in your  
face.

*Charlotte Van de Water, 1917.*

## ROAD SONG

“Seek, seek, but not to find!  
Know the lonely heart of the wind,  
The rim of the hills with the stars behind,  
And the roads of all the world.”

The wind has a home behind the moon,  
The little stars sleep in the glare of noon.  
I walk alone and my heart is blind,  
On the roads of all the world.

*Elizabeth Mason Heath, 1916.*



## CONFIDANTE

I, who walk in the dark,  
Alone beyond all knowing,  
Must watch to-night  
Glad, sheltered light  
In strangers' windows glowing.

Unto me, hungering  
With unfulfilled desires,  
The keen wind brings  
Warm scent of things  
That brew by strangers' fires.

I find my darkened house,  
Silent and all alone,  
And my sup of bread,  
That is dry and dead,  
And no candle but my own.

*Carolyn Crosby Wilson, 1917.*

## THE SUICIDE

“Curse thee, Life, I will live with thee no  
more!  
Thou hast mocked me, starved me, beat  
my body sore!  
And all for a pledge that was not pledged  
by me  
I have kissed thy crust and eaten sparing-  
ly  
That I might eat again, and met thy  
sneers  
With deprecations, and thy blows with  
tears,—  
Aye, from thy gluttoned lash, glad, crawl-  
ed away,  
As if spent passion were a holiday!  
And now I go. Nor threat, nor easy  
vow  
Of tardy kindness can avail thee now  
With me, whence fear and faith alike  
are flown;  
Lonely I came, and I depart alone,

And know not where nor unto whom I  
go;  
But that thou canst not follow me I  
know."

Thus I to Life, and ceased; but through  
my brain  
My thought ran still, until I spake again:

"Ah, but I go not as I came,—no trace  
Is mine to bear away of that old grace  
I brought! I have been heated in thy  
fires,  
Bent by thy hands, fashioned to thy  
desires,  
Thy mark is on me! I am not the same  
Nor ever more shall be, as when I came.

Ashes am I of all that once I seemed.  
In me all's sunk that leapt, and all that  
dreamed  
Is wakeful for alarm,—oh, shame to thee,  
For the ill change that thou hast wrought  
in me,  
Who laugh no more nor lift my throat  
to sing!

Ah, Life, I would have been a happy  
thing

To have about the house when I was  
grown

If thou hadst left my little joys alone!  
I asked of thee no favor, save this one;  
That thou wouldst leave me playing in  
the sun!

And this thou didst deny, calling my  
name

Insistently, until I rose and came.

I saw the sun no more. \* \* \* \*It were  
not well

So long on these unpleasant thoughts  
to dwell,

Need I arise tomorrow and renew  
Again my hated tasks, but I am through  
With all things save my thoughts and  
this one night,

So that in truth I seem already quite  
Free and remote from thee,—I feel no  
haste

And no reluctance to depart; I taste,  
Merely, with thoughtful mien, an un-  
known draught,

That in a little while I shall have quaff-  
ed.”

Thus I to Life, and ceased, and slightly  
smiled,

Looking at nothing! and my thin dreams  
fled

Before me one by one till once again  
I set new words unto an old refrain:

“Treasures thou hast that never have  
been mine!

Warm lights in many a secret chamber  
shine

Of thy gaunt house, and gusts of song  
have blown

Like blossoms out to me that sat alone!  
And I have waited well for thee to show  
If any share were mine,—and now I go!  
Nothing I leave, and if I naught attain  
I shall but come into mine own again!”

Thus I to Life, and ceased, and spake  
no more,

But, turning, straightway sought a cer-  
tain door

In the rear wall. Heavy it was, and low

And dark,—a way by which none e'er  
would go  
That other exit had, and never knock  
Was heard thereat,—bearing a curious  
lock  
Some chance had shown me fashioned  
fcultily,  
Whereof Life held, content, the useless  
key,  
And great coarse hinges, thick and rough  
with rust,  
Whose sudden voice across a silence  
must,  
I knew, be harsh and horrible to hear,—  
A strange door, ugly like a dwarf.  
So near  
I came I felt upon my feet the chill  
Of a dread wind creeping across the sill.  
So stood longtime, till over me at last  
Came weariness, and all things other  
passed  
To make it room; the still night drifted  
deep  
Like snow about me, and I longed for  
sleep.

But suddenly, marking the morning  
hour,  
Bayed the deep-throated bell within  
the tower!  
Startled, I raised my head,—and with  
a shout  
Laid hold upon the latch,—and was  
without.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ah, long-forgotten, well-remembered  
road,  
Leading me back unto my old abode,  
My father's house! There in the night  
I came,  
And found them feasting, and all things  
the same  
As they had been before. A splendor  
hung  
Upon the walls, and such sweet songs  
were sung  
As, echoing out of very long ago,  
Had called me from the house of Life,  
I know.  
So fair their raiment shone I looked in  
shame

On the unlovely garb in which I came!  
Then straightway at my hesitancy mock-  
ed:

“It is my father’s house!” I said, and  
knocked;

And the door opened. To the shining  
crowd,

Tattered and dark I entered, like a cloud,  
Seeing no face but his; to him I crept,  
And “Father!” I cried, and clasped his  
knees, and wept.

Ah, days of joy that followed! All alone  
I wandered through the house. My  
own, my own,

My own to touch, my own to taste and  
smell,

All I had lacked so long and loved so  
well!

None shook me out of sleep, none hush-  
ed my song,

None called me in from the sunlight all  
day long.

I know not when the wonder came to me  
Of what my father’s business might be,



And whither fared and on what errands  
bent

The tall and gracious messengers he  
sent.

Yet one day with no song from dawn till  
night

Wondering I sat and watched them out  
of sight.

And the next day I called; and on the  
third

Asked them if I might go,—but no one  
heard.

Then, sick with longing, I arose at last  
And went unto my father,—in that vast  
Chamber wherein he for so many years  
Has sat, surrounded by his charts and  
spheres.

“Father,” I said, “Father, I cannot play  
The harp that thou didst give me; and  
all day

I sit in idleness, while to and fro  
About me thy serene, grave servants go;  
And I am weary of my lonely ease.  
Better a perilous journey overseas

Away from thee, than this, the life I  
lead,

To sit all day in the sunshine like a weed  
That grows to naught,—I love thee  
more than they

Who serve thee most; yet serve thee in  
no way.

Father, I beg of thee a little task  
To dignify my days,—’tis all I ask  
Forever, but forever, this denied,  
I perish.”

“Child,” my father’s voice replied,  
“All things thy fancy hath desired of me  
Thou hast received. I have prepared  
for thee

Within my house a spacious chamber,  
where

Are delicate things to handle and to  
wear,

And all these things are thine. Dost  
thou love song?

My minstrels shall attend thee all day  
long.

Or sigh for flowers? My fairest gar-  
dens stand

Open as fields to thee on every hand.  
And all thy days this word shall hold  
the same:  
No pleasure shalt thou lack that thou  
shalt name.  
But as for tasks"—he smiled, and shook  
his head:  
"Thou hadst thy task, and laidst it by,"  
he said.

*Edna St. Vincent Millay, 1917.*

## AN ETCHING

A grey ship sails into a misty sky.  
Grey sea gulls tipped with white go circling by.  
Oh, ship! so like my life you seem to me,  
Grey life against a grey eternity.  
Oh, sea gulls! like the years you circling fly,  
Grey years white tipped with dreams that soar so high.  
Oh, ship, that you might rest against the sky  
While sea gulls tipped with white go circling by!

*Elsie Lanier, 1918.*

## ATTAINMENT

To reach the top you strove;  
You only saw brown earth that backward  
    swept  
Beneath your feet;  
Above—beyond—the slim path dodged  
    and leapt,  
Than you a thousand times more fleet,  
To lose itself in yon high-clinging grove.

High up, a mountain spring  
Tossed its clear crystal freely down to you,  
With silken shiver,  
Shattered on every jagged rock anew,  
You only said, "Ah, here's a river;  
I'll quench my thirst; 'twill aid my labor-  
    ing."

A free wind from the crown  
Of other distant hills swept by and stir-  
    red  
The waiting trees;

With pleasant quivers of surprise they  
heard  
That you were near; you said, "The  
breeze  
Is good for climbing. Hope it won't die  
down."

Why, when the day was cool  
On some poised cliff could you not pause,  
and there  
With grateful eye  
Scan the walled reaches of the valley fair;  
Or see unfathomable sky  
Gaze back from an unfathomed mountain  
pool?

Thought you through pressing clouds the  
open sky to gain?  
Drenched is the summit with close mists  
and sleet-sharp rain!

*Carolyn Crosby Wilson, 1917.*

## WIND RHYTHM

The moonlight glimmers in a pale green film on the frozen creek and the snow-covered hill beyond. Along the creek stand slender trees, their bare branches dark against the thinly-clouded, violet sky. Fine black twigs quiver across the mist-blurred moon. The wind rises in the heavy firs that droop their branches on the hill;

“Sound and swell,

Sound and swell,

Rocking slow, rocking slow.”

It reaches the slender trees;

“Swirl and sway,

Swirl and sway,

Bending low, bending low.”

Now the little twigs are caught by the wind;

“Falter and fling,

Falter and fling,

Wildly blow, wildly blow.”

*Elizabeth Mary Hincks, 1917.*

## UNSEEN

In the blind darkness of unlit rooms  
I was groping,  
My curious finger-tips seeking elusive  
things.  
When a touch like the breath of a violet  
Brushed me—and was gone.

The myst'ry of delicate moth-wings held  
me  
In thrall.  
Hope whispered to me of the open path  
to the dream-world,  
Of wee sylphs in petal-soft dress.  
I waited—  
Then tenderly sought  
In the silence, scarce breathing my prayer  
For that dream-caress.

Once more it trembled near me—



The spell of all enchanted things was just  
beyond my finger-tips.  
Softly I crushed it to hold forever  
—A narcissus, frail-petalled and dead.

*Bee W. Hasler, 1917.*

## MID-WINTER

If I were God, I'd mould hills rolling low,  
Smooth them and shape them, sift them  
    deep with snow,  
And scatter them with furze that they  
    might lie  
Softly against the wide, deep-tinted sky.  
In slow caress my forming hand would  
    linger,  
Then a swift finger,  
Down some long slope, half carelessly  
    would break  
A jagged course for melting snows to  
    take.  
The out-scooped valley's length they'd  
    run and then'  
Skirting new hills, go slipping out of ken.  
And distanced far, a low-hung sun I'd  
    light,  
And paint blue shadows on the rose-  
    touched white

Then, wearied, put aside my colors and  
my clay,  
And fashion paradise and man on some  
less perfect day.

*Carolyn Crosby Wilson, 1917.*



**AT RANDOM**  
**(A Department of Nonsense)**



## DRESS A LA CARTE

'Tis Friday night, but customs change,  
How college doth progress!  
And so though pie is on the plate  
I wear my ice cream dress!

## NOTHING AT ALL

She was a tall and goodly Senior,  
I was an innocent Freshman small,  
I met her one night in the Ethics alcove,  
That was all.

She was a spectacled Greek professor,  
I was an innocent freshman small,  
I asked in the hall, "Do you do our sweep-  
ing?"  
That was all.

He was a gas-man, pleasantly smiling,  
I was an innocent freshman small,  
I only asked him to change my schedule,  
That was all.

It was a beautiful senior parlor,  
I was an innocent freshman small,  
It looked so nice I stepped inside it,  
That was all.



Then why do they laugh and point the  
finger

At me, an innocent freshman small?  
I'm only asking for information,  
That is all.

*F. L. McK., 1898.*

## LAMENT

The Vassar student well displays  
Her slothful disposition  
She twines about the classroom chairs  
In serpentine position.

In Sunday Evening Music, too,  
She finds it much more pleasing  
To lie recumbent on the seat,  
Her weary soul thus easing.

In such wild ways she will persist,  
It tears my soul asunder;  
Do you suppose she thinks it's *nice*?  
I wonder, oh, I wonder --

K. T., 1910.

## IRONY

I thought that it was fit  
For me to study up a bit  
On the Ec. conditions of the working  
class;  
But just lately I have learned  
That my study must be turned  
To an Ec. condition of my own, alas!

## THE LEADING MAN

"Oh isn't the leading man good?

Her voice—"And his gestures, my dear.

He is more like herself when he smiles,

But doesn't her moustache look queer?"

"He is only pretending to smoke;

Those puffs—"Come from her powder-  
can.

And when she makes love to the girl,"

"She is the most wonderful man!"

*L. U., 1910.*

## MY SOUL

My soul is like an alley cat  
Long, mangy, lank and thin;  
It never feeds on porterhouse  
But from the garbage tin.

O Thou, who feedest hungry souls  
And seek'st to make them fat,  
I pray that Thou mayst make my soul  
A house—not alley-cat.

Then may it, sleeping, purr alway,  
Calm in its sleek rotundity,  
A boul'vard soul, and boul'vard fed,  
A perfect soul, the soul of me!

*R. P. L., 1913.*

## SONNET TO A HAIRPIN

Implement of beauty and of use!  
Female Adorner! At such waste I frowned

When first I saw thee broken on the  
ground,

Dropped by some "libe" ward maid;  
with tresses loose

Onward she fled and murmured low, "The  
Deuce".

In thousands since, the pretty shell I've  
found,

In millions, meeker ones in wire gowned,  
Oh stay of locks! How great is thy abuse!

Yet some who shed thee most have learned  
in "Ec."

(Or other class) that use is one great  
force

And beauty t'other, to keep life's craft  
afloat.

These lost and gone, the ship is like to  
leak.

But careless, thee they drop along their  
course,

Knowing thy gifts. And yet they wish  
the vote!

*M. M., 1915.*

## A PSYCHOLOGICAL DISILLUSION

They said it was a "cinchy", three lectures  
a week

And nothing she'd tell you was new—

The quizzes were easy, and in the half-  
year

There were only three topics to do.

So I signed for the stuff with a smile on  
my face,

In college such joy rides are few.

And the first weeks slipped by, while I  
worked not at all

I had only three topics to do.

Then came round a week-end I meant to  
begin,

But I found I'd a theme overdue,

A tea and a lecture; my worry was small  
With only three topics to do.

A trip to New York, a Hall Play, a guest,  
My conscience began to pursue



And poison my mind with the ghost of the  
thought

There were still those three topics to do.

Though I've worked like a Trojan to find  
some spare time,

In a week the semester is through—

And with all my reviewing and several  
long themes

I've still those three topics to do.

*H. E. B., 1917.*

## THE BALLAD OF BAD 'BACCY

Where Market and the Main Street meet  
In U. C. S. shop quite replete  
With every sort of smoky treat,  
I'm working.

One day there came a maiden sweet  
On neat and hesitating feet,  
And her remarks I now repeat  
Sans shirking.

"I want" said she, "kind sir, to get  
A mild but mellow cigarette  
That's pleasant for to smell, and yet  
Has pep."

Whereat I did proceed to slip  
Her scented things with golden tip  
And winked, as who would say, quite flip,  
"I'm hep."

Her look would make your heart to bleed,  
"I do not smoke the filthy weed,"  
Said she, "I will explain my need  
Of nicotine.

For in my dormitory cellar  
There lives and smokes a wretched fellar,  
A silent subterranean dweller,  
Who's never seen.

"And through my register a fume  
Each morning floods my sitting-room,  
And wraps me close in smoke and gloom  
All day.  
And if from morn till eve I choke,  
And folks all think 'tis I who smoke  
I'm going to choose the brand—or croak,  
I say!"

Said I, "Fatimas or Pell Mell  
Are famous for their pleasant smell  
But I've a plan that works as well—  
Retire him!  
Go to the folks the help that hire,  
And with this motto raise their ire,  
'There is no smoke without a fire—  
So fire him!'"

C. C. W., 1917.

## PISCIS VASSARIAE

Ent'ring the dining room in doubt,  
And gazing hopefully about,  
On every hand I hear a shout,  
"I pass!" "By me!" and "One without!"

Seeking my place I quickly feel  
A touch upon my arm. I wheel.  
A stranger queries at my heel  
"Do they play bridge at every meal?"

A gentle guest—I would not sass her—  
For I was once as simple as her,  
And so, I murmur as I pass her—  
"It is the day for fish at Vassar."

C. C. W., 1917.

## FLUNCTURE

Once 'twas an oyster gaunt and pallid  
Enmeshed in coils of macaroni;  
And once it was a salmon sallid;  
And once 'twas fish both strong and boni.

And once the heat came on at noon;  
And once it never came at all;  
And once it waned, as wanes the moon,  
When Fahrenheit began to fall.

And once I flunked me flat in Ethics;  
And once I flunked in Mathematics.

---

Who was it flunked in Dietetics?  
Who was it flunked in Thermostatics?

C. C. W., 1917.

## THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH

The first bell rang at dawn of day;  
The air was chill, the sky was grey;  
    I would have slept.  
The bed was cozy where I lay,  
And my first class three hours away;  
    Yet up I leapt.

Into my roomy's room I sped  
And slammed the window by her bed;  
    In accents gay  
"Get up, it's pancake day," I said.  
She pulled the covers round her head--  
    "We had them yesterday!"

C. C. W., 1917.

## WHY DID I EVER COME TO THIS PLACE?

*(An expedition in untrammelled verse)*

Sometimes  
When the eight o'clock bell rings,  
And the maids,  
In a long, black, frantic line,  
Scurry from the dining-room  
Like rats  
From a doomed ship,  
(Nor will any of them catch my eye  
Though I have been waiting  
As patient as a farmer's wife  
Since dawn)  
I say to myself,  
Or to any who cares to listen,  
That college is a bore,  
And that woman's place  
Is in the home.

And again,  
When the chapel chimes,

Forgetting that it is TOWN SUNDAY,  
(Or uninformed)  
Ding,  
That is to say, "peal",  
For quite some time,  
As blithe,  
And inexorable,  
And out of tune,  
As anybody else in a bath-tub,  
(Or as foolishly complacent  
As a football player  
Who runs in the wrong direction  
And scores a goal  
For the other side)  
I turn in bed,  
And glare at the plaster, which is scarred  
By generations of thumb-tacks,  
For whose insertion I,  
As guiltless  
As is a Freshman of knowledge,  
Do semi-annually  
Settle,  
And I say to myself,  
Or to the servant who comes in just then  
To empty the waste-basket,



That college  
Is the misapprehension  
Of a June-bug mind,  
And that woman's place  
Is in the home.

And always  
When with some youth,  
Whom I do not love,  
But might,  
In the proper environment,  
I have trudged for hours,  
Pointing out the Library  
And the Art Building,  
Over and over,  
(For the parlors  
Are full of parents,  
And five room-mates  
Are an insufficient chaperone)  
Always  
I say to myself,  
Or to the night-watchman,  
Who does not care,  
That I wish I were happily married  
To a dyspeptic widower

With six small children,  
And that higher education for women  
Is as paradoxical a quantity  
As prohibition at election time,  
And that woman's place  
Is in the home.

*E. St. V. M., 1917.*

## PARTIALITY

I don't care much for water snakes and  
wiry centipedes,  
It seems to be a footless life the solemn  
fishworm leads,  
In fact, the crawling creatures that appeal  
to me are few—  
But I love the gentle Caterpillar, snuggl-  
ing in my shoe.

The reason for this preference is very  
plainly shown,  
'Tis not for outside beauty, and his soul  
is little known,  
Still I love the Caterpillar—'tis love re-  
turned, you see,  
Because the gentle creature is so very  
fond of *me*.

For he scrambles up the instep of *my* foot,  
or in *my* hair,  
And if he wants to take a snooze, t's  
always in *my* chair,

So I love the gentle Caterpillar dearly as  
can be—  
Were there but one in all the land, he'd  
surely crawl on *me*.

*M. A. P.*, 1905.

## HUMANITY

Tread lightly on the humble bug,  
Step gently on the worm,  
And dry their tears and calm their fears  
And soothe them when they squirm.

*L. B., 1907.*

## HUMILITY

But should a big bug cross your path,  
Give place, with lowered eye.  
Let not a word from you be heard  
Till it has passed you by.

*E. B. D., 1909.*

## BUG OF JUNE

O bug of June that comest still  
When blossomed verdure clothes the hill,  
To thee my warblings I indite,  
Proud monarch of the sultry night.

The campus glowing in the noon  
Is not thy province, bug of June.  
Thou wait'st till in the dying day  
Allures thee forth the droplight's ray.

Thou buzzest in my private cup,  
My honey gives thee royal sup,  
Three room-mates lying in a swoon,  
Proclaim thy power, bug of June!

Strong enough my filial loyalty  
To Alma Mater, yet for me  
The end cannot arrive too soon—  
With freedom from thee, bug of June!

*V. L. B., 1911.*

## A VALENTINE

If I were but a lovely worm  
Which had a graceful, wiggly tail,  
My prepossessing, pretty squirm,  
To win your heart would never fail.  
I'd tie myself in knots for you,  
Or coyly wrinkle up my skin,  
Or stretch myself a foot or two  
As straight and slender as a pin.  
I'd let you bait your hook with me  
And gladly toss myself about  
'Til all the fishes in the sea  
Thought me the worm of worms, no doubt.  
But, if you held me in your hand,  
Still as the great stone sphinx I'd lie,  
Nor any greater joy demand  
Before I curled me up to die.

*M. H., 1912.*

## THE CENTIPEDE

Of all the terrors of the night that make  
one's flesh to crawl

The worst it is the centipede that walketh  
on the wall.

Of all the dangers of the day that chill one  
to the core

The worst it is the centipede that fleeth  
o'er floor.

Of all the horrors of dawn and dusk that  
wring one on the rack

The worst it is the centipede that crawleth  
from the crack.

One finds him in one's teacup, in one's  
bathtub, and one's bed,

And he drops quick from the ceiling on  
one's unsuspecting head,

And his wiggly legs still wiggle after one  
has squashed him dead.

He leaves a gooey brownish stain upon  
one's smooth cream wall

When his crawly self is blotted out and  
nevermore will crawl;



Ah, yes, alive or dead he is of known beasts  
worst of all!

Sometimes when I am working in my  
chamber late at night

And look up at my wall with murders  
spotted, by dim light

Each deathplace seems to move and crawl  
—it is a ghastly sight.

And far up near the ceiling where the gay  
mosquito hies

Faint moving dots reveal themselves as  
spiders, moths, and flies,

How deep I love their so few legs for this  
so sweet surprise.

Perhaps the cause of centipedes in the  
great scheme of nature

Is just to teach us heartfelt joy for every  
other creature.

For of all the beasts in all the world that  
craze one's soul with fear

The worst is sure the centipede that is  
my roommate here.

*E. K., 1916*

## SPRING SONG

Worms! How I hate them writhing in the  
rain

On all the paths from Josselyn to Main!  
And how I hate the slimy way they feel,  
Cringing and crushed beneath a rubber  
heel!

And how I hate the bloated way they  
squirm—

See! There are twins and there is half a  
worm!

C. C. W., 1917.







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